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Death Anxiety and Quality of Life in Iranian Caregivers of Patients With Cancer

KEY WORDS

Cancer
Death anxiety
Family caregiver
Quality of life

Background: Concerns about death may alienate and negatively impact communication among family members of patients with life-threatening illness. Little is known about the relationship of death anxiety to quality of life in cancer family caregivers. **Objective:** The aim of this study was to examine relationships between sociodemographic and patient-related factors, social support, and religiosity with death anxiety and quality of life in Iranian cancer family caregivers. **Methods:** Three hundred thirty family caregivers from an urban regional cancer institute in Iran participated in a descriptive-correlational study that incorporated sociodemographic surveys and validated death anxiety (Templer Scale) and Quality of life (Family Version) instruments. **Results:** Caregivers reported moderate levels of death anxiety and decrements in QOL. Quality of life was inversely associated with death anxiety ($r = -0.30$, $P < .001$). Female caregivers who were daughters had higher death anxiety, whereas male caregivers who were sons reported higher quality of life. **Conclusions:** Death anxiety is associated with lowered quality of life in Iranian family caregivers. Multiple factors may impact death anxiety and quality of life relevant to the socioreligious milieu. **Implications for Practice:** Addressing concerns that increase death anxiety may improve quality of life and lower stress associated with adapting to the family caregiver role. Caregiving responsibilities, added to challenges associated with personal, family, and professional life, impact multiple aspects of QOL. As nurses increasingly care for patients from diverse backgrounds, it becomes more imperative that support for family caregivers that promotes psychological adaptation and quality of life is needed.

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